

American Civil Liberties Union Foundation
Criminal Law Reform Project
New York, NY

POSITION: Staff Attorney

The **American Civil Liberties Union Foundation (ACLU)** is a nationwide, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, founded in 1920 and dedicated to the principles of liberty and equality embodied in the U.S. Constitution. The Criminal Law Reform Project of the ACLU is seeking a dynamic and resourceful staff attorney. The position is located at the National Office in New York City.

OVERVIEW

The Criminal Law Reform Project seeks an end to excessively harsh crime policies that result in mass incarceration and stand in the way of a just and equal society. The Project focuses its work at the “front end” of the criminal justice system, from an individual’s first contact with law enforcement through to the sentencing phase, with an emphasis on ending our nation’s punitive drug policies, which have failed to achieve public safety and health while putting unprecedented numbers of people behind bars and eroding constitutional rights. We fulfill our mission through strategic litigation and advocacy that promotes reform of the criminal justice system and drug laws in particular, reduces the number of people entering the system, and protects the constitutional rights of those in the system.

The Project’s current priorities include: reducing reliance on incarceration, with a focus on decriminalizing drug offenses and shortening sentencing schemes overall; reducing racial disparity in the criminal justice system through challenging the selective enforcement of drug laws; and challenging police and prosecutorial misconduct and abuses of power. In addition to these core priorities, the Project also works in the following areas: enacting pre-arrest diversion and similar reforms that reduce entry into prisons and jails; reducing penalties not only by ending drug prohibition but also reducing penalties for other offenses; reducing the collateral consequences of drug convictions; protecting emerging rights of the seriously-ill to use medical marijuana; halting the expansion of random drug testing programs in schools and the workplace; and addressing the criminal justice implications of emerging surveillance technologies.

The Project (formerly the Drug Law Reform Project) has changed its name to reflect an evolution and expansion in the range of criminal justice issues it confronts in doing its work. The Project maintains an explicit – though not exclusive – focus on ending punitive drug policies in recognition of the fact that while our nation’s drug policies have largely driven the crisis of over-incarceration in the U.S., drug laws are only one aspect of the criminal justice system in urgent need of reform.

The Project is part of the ACLU’s Center for Justice, which also comprises the National Prison Project and the Capital Punishment Project. The Center seeks to transform the U.S. criminal justice system into one that views incarceration as an option of last – not first – resort; that is effective, fair, and free of racial bias; that rejects death as a legitimate form of punishment; and that is evidence-based rather than fear-based.

For more information, please visit: www.aclu.org/drugpolicy.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Staff Attorney will report directly to the Director of the Project, and applicants should be prepared to contribute to all aspects of the Project’s litigation and non-litigation work, including:

- Performing legal work including trial and appellate level litigation, possible criminal representation, discovery and motion practice, appellate briefs and arguments, occasional trials, legislative advocacy and policy analysis
- Creating multi-pronged strategies utilizing litigation and non-litigation policy advocacy and public education to further the Project’s mission and goals
- Engaging in non-litigation advocacy in conjunction with legal strategies
- Collaborating with other drug policy reform advocates and organizations

- Participating in public speaking opportunities, press interviews and presenting at conferences on relevant issues on the Project's behalf
- Supervising legal fellows and law students

EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

- J.D. degree required and a minimum of five years of experience in federal court litigation is preferred, particularly experience in constitutional law, civil rights or criminal law. Experience should include lead counsel role and supervision of junior attorneys in litigation and non-litigation projects. Outstanding candidates with less experience will be considered.
- Member of New York State Bar or willingness and ability to gain admittance shortly after being hired
- Demonstrated commitment to public interest generally and civil liberties issues in particular is required; experience with criminal justice issues and civil litigation is preferred.
- Experience in criminal justice policy including advocacy to governmental organizations, community organizing, and public education preferred.
- Excellent writing, analytic and research skills
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to speak clearly and effectively
- Self-motivation and proven ability to manage a variety of complex tasks, preferably in integrating advocacy with litigation
- Demonstrated ability to think creatively and strategically about using litigation to achieve policy reform, particularly regarding issues that affect communities of color
- Ability to work in a collaborative team environment
- Experience in motivating and directing other litigation staff.
- Significant travel will be required

COMPENSATION

The ACLU offers a generous and comprehensive compensation and benefits package, commensurate with experience and within parameters of ACLU compensation scale.

HOW TO APPLY

If you are a proactive and resourceful team player with a passion for public interest issues, please send a cover letter explaining your interest in our work; a resume; two references; and two writing samples unedited by others, at least one of which should be a legal research memo, brief, or article. Applicants who graduated from law school within the last five years should include law school transcript. Applications should be sent by email to hrjobs@aclu.org – reference [CLRP-10/AICH] in the subject line – or by mail to:

Human Resources
RE: [CLRP-10/AICH]
 American Civil Liberties Union
 125 Broad Street, 18th Floor
 New York, NY 10004

Applications will be accepted until position is filled, which will not be before **August 15, 2010**. *Please indicate where you learned of this job posting.*

The ACLU is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and encourages applications from women, people of color, persons with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals.

The ACLU comprises two separate corporate entities, the American Civil Liberties Union and the ACLU Foundation. Both the American Civil Liberties Union and the ACLU Foundation are national organizations with the same overall mission, and share office space and employees. The ACLU has two separate corporate entities in order to do a broad range of work to protect civil liberties. This job posting refers collectively to the two organizations under the name "ACLU."

PLEASE CONTACT AICH/WIA PROGRAM (212-598-0100, ext 221) FOR JOB-SEARCH ASSISTANCE!

(Customers must be Native American and meet WIA program eligibility requirements in order to receive transportation assistance, clothing allowance, cash incentives once employed, child care assistance, etc., etc..)

Posted: 7/21/2010